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#### INFORMATION NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Council  
Subject: Remaking Europe through culture  
*- Information from the French delegation*

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Delegations will find attached an information note from the French delegation on the above subject, which has been put on the agenda for the next meeting of the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council on 20 and 21 November 2017 under 'Any other business'.

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## **Remaking Europe through culture**

The French authorities wish to share with the Council of Ministers for Culture and Audiovisual Affairs the ideas that emerged from the meeting of EU Ministers for Culture – entitled 'Remaking Europe through culture' – organised by the French Minister for Culture, in liaison with her German counterpart, on the sidelines of the Frankfurt Book Fair on 11 October 2017.

This informal meeting enabled us to discuss practical initiatives embodying the aim of a 'People's Europe', remade through culture; we also looked at the solutions EU policies may provide to the challenges related to the creation of works and to cultural diversity in the digital age.

### **I. Remaking a 'People's Europe' through culture**

At a time of major crisis in Europe, we firmly believe that culture and the arts can make a greater contribution to bringing individuals and peoples closer together. Our discussions focused on the mobility of artists and of professionals working in the field of culture as a possible response to this challenge. Europe is more than an economic bloc; it is, first and foremost, a great forum for the circulation of ideas, knowledge and creative talent. We therefore believe that, in the light of the schemes already in existence and the needs identified in each of our Member States, it would be beneficial to set up a 'cultural Erasmus' to promote mobility in the cultural sectors. We also believe it is important to devise initiatives that can help to develop a taste for culture among the younger generation, and that can help to integrate migrants by promoting their participation in cultural life and in society.

Access to European culture in all its diversity was referred to as an issue of major concern, which needs to be addressed. The discussions also touched on the question of linguistic diversity, a source of extraordinary richness for Europe, including through translation.

We looked at how cultural heritage forms the basis for our common European identity and our future. Indeed, the European Year of Cultural Heritage, which will take place in 2018, is prompting us to think about how, through cultural heritage, we can reclaim our European identity in all its diversity and unity.

Cultural heritage must be protected not just in Europe but also throughout the world, given its importance for the history of humanity. Adopting a flexible, suitable instrument at EU level would make it possible to wage an effective battle against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods.

## **II. Putting cultural issues at the heart of European policies**

In the course of our discussions, there was agreement on the key role to be played by authors in the remaking of Europe. Europe's cultural and creative industries testify to the extraordinary creativity of our continent's artists and enterprises. The basic principles of copyright have ensured that creators of works are remunerated in an efficient manner. The digital revolution has led to the development of new models and practices and the emergence of new stakeholders.

While these new uses have undoubtedly brought benefits, the question of adapting the economic, legal and competitive environment must also be addressed. Another issue is how these new stakeholders can contribute to financing the creation of works. We therefore believe it is necessary to promote an environment which favours copyright as the basis for financing the creation of works. How to achieve fair remuneration for all authors and all forms of artistic creation in the modern digital world, with a view to supporting the uniqueness and diversity of Europe, is something we could discuss together.

It would therefore be useful if we could hold a collective exchange of views on the policy lines the European Union wishes to lay down, for example as part of the ongoing reform of copyright legislation, with the aim of creating a suitable environment in which Europe's cultural industries can flourish in the digital age and ensuring that creators receive fair remuneration for each use of their works. In the course of our discussions, we touched on issues related to value sharing between creators and the large platforms which distribute their works, compliance with the territoriality principle inherent in copyright, particularly in the audiovisual and cinema sector, and enshrining a related right which would enable the additional economic value created by press publishers to be recognised.

The creation and dissemination of cultural products – including books, films and music – are at the heart of European trade but not of European policies. Trade liberalisation, completing the internal market, taxation, a framework for State aid, and financial stimulus are all issues which have an impact on culture, which is in a position of weakness when it comes to such matters. The fragility of this situation is being put to the test by the digital revolution and the subsequent emergence of new economic players operating on a global scale; there is a clear need to rethink the place culture occupies in European policies.

As of now, and with a view to the political deadlines represented by the 2019 European elections and the post-2020 financial framework, we believe that it is important to hold discussions within the Council to enable us to formulate recommendations on 'Remaking Europe through culture' and ensure that culture is once again given its due place in EU policies.

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